

We see this hope for peace in Sri Lanka is already coming to fruition. Since December, medicine, supplies and other goods are being shipped to Tamil Tiger-controlled areas. Shipment of goods to these areas has been under the control of the Sri Lankan Government, but the controls have been relaxed for the past several months.

Mr. Speaker, I should note that President Kumaratunga has been outspoken in her criticism of the terms of the cease fire. As President she has the power to suspend parliament and dismiss the government. If she is not satisfied with certain provisions within the peace agreement, the deal may be canceled.

The differences between the President and Prime Minister must be worked out so Sri Lanka can proceed with dealing with this deadly conflict between Sri Lanka and the LTTE. In any case, the Prime Minister has announced that any peace agreement would have to be supported by a referendum, which ensures that the people of Sri Lanka would be participating in the peace process.

In the upcoming months, it is important to watch closely how this peace process unfolds in Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister is willing to negotiate all forms of settlement with the LTTE, except for establishment of an independent homeland for the Tamil community.

I encourage the LTTE to shed its terrorist negotiating tactics and come to the table with the Sri Lankan Government and engage in a substantive debate that I hope will lead to a permanent cease fire, peace in Sri Lanka, and greater stability throughout the South Asian region.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OSBORNE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### FIGHTING HATE CRIMES IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise on the floor of the House this afternoon.

Two weeks ago in my California district, which includes Santa Barbara, a 37-year-old man named Clinton Scott Risetter was brutally murdered, burned to death in his bed. Such a killing would be tragic under any circumstances. Yet this is particularly painful because Mr. Risetter was murdered because he was a homosexual. Let me say that even in a community as tolerant as Santa Barbara, intolerance still has an ugly and evil face.

I am heartened by much of what has transpired since the tragic incident. I am proud that local law enforcement agencies have responded swiftly and thoroughly. The police department and district attorney are working closely with the community, including gay rights organizations, for which I am pleased and very grateful. But I also believe that we must confront the ugly specter of hate crimes on a national, as well as a local, level.

Last year at this time, an important bill was introduced in the House, the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. This bill, sponsored by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), would strengthen the Federal response to hate crime violence which is motivated by race, color, religion, or national origin. It would also expand the law to cover hate crimes committed against people because of their gender, sexual orientation, or disability, as well as to expand Federal jurisdiction to cover the most violent of these hate crimes.

As it stands now, Federal authorities cannot act on cases involving death or serious bodily injury based on gender, sexual orientation, or disability when local law enforcement is not available. Now fortunately this does not impact the case in Santa Barbara; but even so, many people throughout the country are left without any chance for justice when their own States fail to act.

So I am pleased that Santa Barbara has, as a community, responded with outrage and compassion to this recent event, the vicious hate crime which has occurred there. But as a society we must continue to confront what lies at the root of these horrendous hate crimes, and that is where our Federal legislation comes in and why it is so very important.

The Hate Crimes Prevention Act would provide communities with important prevention tools, including grants to State and local programs designed to combat hate crimes committed by juveniles and training for local law enforcement officers in investigating, prosecuting, and preventing hate crimes altogether.

We cannot ignore the facts. Since 1996, hate crimes committed against individuals based on sexual orientation have increased nearly 28 percent. I will not remain silent on this issue. I am compelled to do whatever I can to prevent another hostile and tragic act on anyone because of his or her sexual orientation.

In a post-September 11 society, where tolerance and acceptance are strongly encouraged and promoted by our government and local communities, these types of crimes must not go unpunished or unexplored. Let us make the Hate Crimes Prevention Act a reality. Let us make a true commitment to every American citizen, be they gay or straight, Muslim, Christian, white, black, Hispanic or Asian. It should not take a brutal murder to jar the Congress out of acting out of common sense and basic human decency. It is

too late to save the life of Mr. Risetter, but it is not too late to take the kind of action which will honor his memory.

#### HONORING DEREK PARRA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for cooperating with me in pressing calendar circumstances.

I have come to the floor because I will be inserting in the RECORD some detailed information about a young man from my hometown, San Bernardino, California, by the name of Derek Parra who won, among other things, a gold and a silver medal at the Winter Olympic Games, a fabulous young person who is an inspiration to our entire community. Not only has he made a difference to our community, he is impacting young people across the country.

It is my pleasure to mention, among other things, as I have done some homework on him, he is an employee of Home Depot. I have learned that Home Depot is doing a fantastic job of helping the Olympics by having employees who work for them have a good deal of flexibility in terms of their schedule and the way their jobs are funded, et cetera.

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They have, in a very substantial way, demonstrated what the private sector can do to improve our ability to effectively impact a wonderful event such as the Winter Olympic games.

So my hat is off to Home Depot, and I hope all my colleagues will recognize these good works and encourage them across the country.

Mr. Speaker, the people of my hometown, San Bernardino, were specially thrilled by the Olympic heroism of Derek Parra, who became the first Mexican-American to win a medal at the Winter games when he took both a gold and silver medal in speed-skating. His story is one of making sacrifice and working tirelessly to achieve his life's dream of winning at the Olympics.

Derek Parra twice left family and home behind to pursue his dream—once moving to Florida to become an international star at inline skating races, and then again heading to Utah to train for speed-skating, a sport he had never tried as a child in sunny Southern California. Those who know San Bernardino recognize that hard-working spirit, and our hometown celebrated with daylong events that included a spirited parade and packed awards dinner.

While it is clear that Derek Parra meant to reach for his Olympic dream in any way he could, his time in Utah was made easier by The Home Depot, the national hardware chain that is known for its orange aprons. When he arrived in Salt Lake City, Parra landed a job in floors and walls at the West Valley Home Depot, which helped him provide for himself and his family during the year leading up to the Olympics.